

Recollections of Dixie.

SEE THE OLD PLANTATION—
On the dark
Red river bank;
The fields of cotton-
stalks and stubble-
cane,
And the cotton-wood se-
dell
All along the levee
And the negro cabins
down the soddie a-
lane.

I see the "white folks"
house, with its
veranda
spread
Like great big arms
of welcome to the
guest;

Let him come whenever he will,
When his foot strikes that door-sill
He is partner of its bounty—and its best.

I see the old gin-house, with its broken window-
lights,
And the line scattered all about the door;
And I hear its creaking noise,
And the clear voice of "the boys"
Singing dapper songs I'll love forever more.

I see the big black kettle on the roaring green-
wood fire,
And the scaffold where the tattered pigs are
left;

It is now "hog-killin' time,"
Darky fun is in its prime,
Christmas bladders, blown up, ripen in the
shade.

In each cabin is a sack full of golden hick'ry
nuts,
Walnuts, or pecans so sleek and russet
brown.
Great jugs of persimmon beer,
New-laid eggs, new scare and "dear,"
All to "trade for Chris'mas goodies up in
town."

I catch the mellow strumming of a banjo on the
air,
I smell the spare-ribs in the frying-pan!
"Chris'mus comes but once a year,"
Ever nigger wants his share,
So good-bye, I'm going to see my Mary
Ann."

So the long, bright, winter day fades to gray
dusk in the west,
While the stars come out and twinkle in the
sky.
On the frosty fields they beam,
On the dark old bloody stream,
I'm so homesick—I must stop and—have a
cry!

BELLE HUNT.

THE OLD PLANTATION.

A Christmas Eve Story.

HE GOLDEN SUN-
light sparkles on
the river and shines
on the green slope
of lawn leading
down to the bank,
for, though this is
Dec. 24th, 1859,
the smooth-cut
grass has not yet
turned brown. Out
on the lawn by the
antique moss-grown
sun-dial stands, in
eager expectancy, a
slim, black figure.
He watches the shadow move slowly—
so very slowly it seems to him—around
the dial. Fifteen minutes—ten min-
utes—five minutes—will it never reach
the hour? At last it falls just on the
figure twelve. Then, with a shout and
a look up at the sun, just overhead, he
speeds off across the lawn, past the
poultry yards, by "the children's
house," all unheeding of the
calls of playmates. Breathless,
he reaches the barn where hangs the
great plantation bell. Holding the rope



YOUNG MAN OF THE TRAIL.

and awaiting him, stands Sam, who is
—under the master himself—the ruler
of this little world.

This, the day before Christmas, is a
half-holiday, and begins for every soul
on the plantation a week of careless
merriment.

The old mansion is in festive attire.
The treasures of the Southern woods,
glowing vines and berries, and even
winter flowers, have been used in
adorning the great dining-hall and par-
lors, while every bed-room has its
wreaths of crimson yucca and lovely
holly twisted and fastened with gray,
drooping moss. Above the front
entrance glows a "Welcome!" standing
out in bold relief—the letters formed
of orange and scarlet berries against a
background of soft, green, wood-ferns.

There is a merry din of voices as the
doors swing open and a gray company
of young men and girls troop in. They
crowd into the parlor, throwing off
wraps and hats as they come, and
grouping about the fire, each one
other good-naturedly, all endeavoring
to speak at once to their hostess, a
pretty, black-haired matron, looking as
young as her own daughters.

"Have you seen Elsie and Mr. Rodney,
Mrs. Cheverill? She started with
us on our walk, and he promised to join
us at the style over the pasture fence,
but he never made his appearance, and
Elsie vanished before we passed by Cedar
Grove."

"It with the strangest thing," put in
little Ernest Travers. "I just left her
a moment to take a briar from Mith
Annie's dretch, and when I came back
she was gone!"

"Yeth, she wath!" said Ledy Chever-
ill in the same doleful tone; "but the
best part of it was, mother, I'm pos-
itively certain that she had behind her



A CHRISTMAS EVE DREAM.

of the big cedars in the grove until we
all went by. She has not a bit of use
for Elsie, and he knows it; yet he will
torment her."

"Lunch is ready, young ladies; won't
you come fix a bit?" the girl asked, as
she led the way.

They followed her to their several
apartments—all but the eldest daughter.

As the last one left the room Mrs.
Cheverill said:

"I wish Elsie would come in; you
know I do not approve of single couples
wandering away by themselves in the
woods."

"The truth is, mother, Mr. Rodney
and Elsie became engaged this day, a
year ago. Three months after, they
quarreled about a mere trifle, and since
then they have not been on speaking
terms. It was something of a shock to
both when they met here."

"They would make such a nice couple
it is a pity," said Mrs. Cheverill, sym-
pathizingly.

"Don't sigh over it, mother. I'll
wager that if they met in the grove the
affair is all fixed by now. There is an
atmosphere about that place perfectly
irresistible to young lovers."

The meal progresses gaily, and the
jolly host has just asked: "What has
become of Elsie?" when the door opens
and, looking very flushed, a little con-
fused, and wholly breathless from fast
walking, she and Rodney appear. He
carries his gun and empty game-bag,
which the butler takes from him with
slightly deprecating air, while Nellie
removes Miss Stewart's wraps, and Mrs.
Cheverill insists that she shall sit right
down and leave her toilet until after
lunch. So they take their chairs and
make a show of eating, but really ac-
complish but little in that line.

There are some sly, amused glances
thrown at the very conscious pair, but
they are mercifully left untaxed, until
the irrepressible Leda says, with a burst
of long suppressed merriment:

"For what a lot of marriages is this
old plantation answerable! Even from
the time of our grandfathers. Say,
Elsie, did you stop at 'Engagement
Oak'?"

And then, to cover the young couple's
confusion, the gracious hostess
arises, and in the general movement
Elsie escapes to her room.

Christmas Eve! The negro quarters
are alive with light and joy and dance.
Great piles of pine-knots blaze on the
brick and earthen stands which are
placed one in front of each negro-house.
Not rough cabins these, but comfort-
able frame buildings with huge chim-



MERRY CHRISTMAS MORN.

neys, in which burn grand fires of oak,
myrtle and pine. In a large, long room,
built for the purpose, with a deep chim-
ney at either end in which the pine-
knots are piled two feet high, are con-
gregated all the young negroes of the
plantation, dancing merrily to the music
of the fiddle.

In the parlors of the "big house" all
is life and light and joy. While the
elders have formed what parties or sit
quietly conversing, the young people
dance.

There is a slow waltz melody, whose fall
And the butler, with a nod and a sweep,
Holds in his spirit their graceful moving feet.

The lamps glow beneath the pottin-
gint of their crimson shades. The
blue-light dances and gleams over the
warm-toned carpets, lighting up the deli-
cate tint of the walls, reflecting itself
in silver and glass, and making more
ruddy the berries of holly and yucca
above the windows and arching doors.

No one hour has swift beat of hooves
feet upon the hard floor of the broad
avenue. No one sees the pair of fided
animals with their weary eyes, as they
center on the soft grass of the lawn up
to the garden's gate, and, hitching
their bodies to the fence, wait slowly
up the path to the great front door,
closed it is true, but with its glowing
welcome showing out boldly in the
moonlight, and with ruddy gleams
shining through the wide open doorway.

The gray-haired butler answers the
summons.

"Who shall I say, sir?" he asks, usher-
ing them into a small ante-room.

The man hesitates, but the girl re-
plies:

"Say belated travelers who would
like to see Mr. Cheverill."

The host, half-unwillingly, lays down
his hand at whist, and, excusing him-
self, answers the summons.

As he enters the room he recognizes
the girl as the daughter of an old friend
—a fellow planter who lives thirty
miles away.

"Why, my dear Miss Duncan, what
is the meaning of this—almost mid-
night, and you here?"

The girl lays her hand in his proffered
one, and says simply:

"I am Mrs. Robinson now, and this
gentleman is my husband."

In "this gentleman" Mr. Cheverill
recognizes the overcoat of his friend,
and hardens immediately. Dropping
the girl's hand, he says, shortly, "Im-
possible!" and awaits their explanation.

His tone stings the young man.

"It is a fact, Mr. Cheverill," he be-
gins impetuously. "I courted Miss Dun-
can openly and honorably, but my
father laughed me to scorn, and bid me
pay my court to one in my own sphere.
We kept apart then, I attending to my
duties, and hoping time would soften
him. At last I went to him again and
asked his consent to the renewal of my
intentions. He hooted at the very idea
of such a thing, and bid me remember
that planters' daughters did not marry
their fathers' overseers. Stung to fury,
I told him I should win Miss Duncan in
spite of him, and he, believing it but
an idle boast, allowed me to stay on,
and so—"

"You abused his confidence. Will
you tell me, sir, why you come with all
this to me?"

"Oh, Mr. Cheverill, listen to me,"
pleaded the girl. "I loved him so, and
could not bear to give him up. He
wanted to go away, saying he knew it
was not right to drag me below my sta-
tion, but my sorrow, my tears, over-
came his resolutions, and we—"

"Ran away and got married, like
two fools!" put in the planter, angrily.
"What do you suppose I can do about
it? I don't approve of it at all. I can
tell you. You have lost the station you
have held as Miss Duncan—you can
only rank as Mrs. Robinson now, and
henceforth."

"I know it," she said, quietly, and
looked up smiling in her husband's face.

on Dec. 25, 1832, twelve years after the
founding of the first organized body of
Christians.

The antiquity of this venerable
church is proven by two deeply marked
date bricks that came down with the
east wall in the year 1887, when the
original wall fell in.

The church having been abandoned
as a house of worship in 1836, in the year
1885 Rev. David Barr, then rector of the
church at Smithfield, Va., and now the
assistant minister of the Church of the
Epiphany of Washington, D. C., under-
took the work of having the old church
put in perfect and complete order.

In the restoration twelve of the
small windows composing the east
window, the nave windows and vestry-
room windows are to be memorials. In
the east window will be one each to
Washington, the only memorial win-
dow to him in the United States; to
Levi Bridges, the builder of the
church; Rev. Mr. Hubbard, last colonial
pastor of the church up to 1802, when he
died; Bishops Moulson, Moore, Meade
and Johns, Virginia's four deceased pas-
tors; Sir Walter Raleigh, Capt. John
Smith, John Rolfe, husband of Pocahontas,
and Rev. Dr. Blair, founder of
William and Mary college.

The southwest corner window in the
nave will be a memorial of Pocahontas,
provided principally by her descend-
ants, and the two opposite ones are
memorials of Parsons Hunt and Whit-
taker, first and second chaplains with
Capt. John Smith in the Virginia col-
ony. Whittaker, baptised Pocahontas
and married her to Rolfe. The first
roof was put on the church in 1633, the
second in 1737, the third about 1821 and
the present new one in 1887.

THE CHRISTMAS TURKEY.

How to Prepare It for the Gastronomic
Fete.

"Turkey boiled is turkey spoiled,
Turkey roasted is turkey lost,
But for turkey braised the Lord be praised."

There may be diverse opinions regard-
ing the two first lines, but in regard to
the third there will be no dissentient
voice when once it has been tried. Fill
the turkey with the best force-meat
you can make. The most elegant is
made of sweetbreads and mushrooms,
or truffles intermixed, but an ordinary
bread or chicken stuffing, made savory
with seasonings, will be very delicious.
After stuffing hold the bird breast down
over a bright fire to stiffen it, and then
lard with strips of salt pork. Place in
a large sauce-pan, breast upward, with
sliced carrot, onion, celery and parsnip,
and cover with broth. Cook closely
covered in the oven until the bird is
tender, basting it occasionally to give
the desired light brown color. When
done, strain and tie on the gravy and
serve in a boat. For an elegant com-
pany dish garnish with stoned olives,
small force-meat balls made of chicken,
mushrooms, and sweetbreads cut in
dice.

THE HERO OF A ROMANCE.

Old Hanover, About whom a Beautiful
Christmas Story was Told.

The portrait that accompanies this
article appeared in the Christmas num-
ber of Harper's Magazine a year ago,
as the picture of the hero of a very en-
tertaining novelette by Thomas Nelson
Page. No man knows the Southern
colored man and his dialect and his
mental processes better than Mr. Page,
and thousands of readers will feel that
they have made almost a personal ac-
quaintance with "Old Hanover" when
they have read what Mr. Page makes
him say.

But on the other hand, a greater
number of persons will be puzzled by
the recollection that they have
often met this identical colored man
shuffling along the streets of
New York, the master of in Vir-
ginia, where the story places him.

As a matter of fact, "Old Hanover" is a
thoroughbred New York whitewasher,
and, beautiful as Mr. Page's story is, it
is not the true story. The old day's
portrait, painted by John W. Alexan-
der, now hangs on the dining-room wall
in the Fellowship club on East
Twenty-ninth street, that city, and
Mr. Alexander once told his friends
in the club, where he is the vice-pres-
ident, just how it came to be painted.

Mr. Alexander saw the old man on
the street and asked him to come up to
his studio in the Chelsea apartment
house in Twenty-third street. Having
gotten him there, he told him he
would make him a handsome present if
he would stand up and be painted. The
old man was more than willing, and as
he stood before the artist he rattled on
in characteristic dapper fashion, talk-
ing about everything he could think
about, and Mr. Alexander encouraged
him, lest he should get tired of stand-
ing.

"Ah dun know wherjah was bo'n," he
was saying when the right pose was
struck by him and caught on the canvas.
"Ah spears 's a nigger 'bout dat, but
'ah'm pow'ful old. Ah's so old dat ah
seen de British gumbos a-fightin' away
in de Gulf ob Mexico when ah was a
shile, and dey was so fur away de soun'
ob de guns was nothin' but jist piff, piff,
piff." That is what Old Hanover is say-
ing as the picture was laid out, and with
each repetition of the word "piff" he
looked out his forefinger as you see him
looking in the portrait.

By and by he grew more at ease and,
of course, grew a little more familiar in
his speech. He was evidently puzzled
by seeing all the elegances and orna-
ments of the painter's beautiful studio.
Such is the true story about Old Hano-
ver and his "piff."

OLD HANOVER

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A LESSON IN CONTENTMENT.

FOR THE DEMOCRAT, BY "UNCLE ELMOBOD.".

A Fern leaf, hidden in a quiet cell,
On Walnut's banks, had this queer
tale to tell:

A month or more ago, (the leaf began),
I 'spied a ray of the November sun,
And as I batted me in the mellow ray
A pretty robin fluttered down my way
In friendly gossip I asked her to tell
How wags the world outside my quiet dell!
She thus replied:

"The world! A-lack-a-day
My world is small, I seldom fly away
Beyond th' confines of this county fair.
What is beyond I never have a care.
I'm happy with my mate to dwell right here,
Where all is joy, and plenty, and good cheer.
The harvest moon went down behind glad
fields

Of ripen'd grain that gave up bounteous yields:
The farmer sings contentment, and his wife
Goes cheerily about her carra of life;
The cows and horses, pigs, and chickens too,
Are sleek and fat, and all the country through
There lies plenty—all do seem content—
Both man and beast—with what the Lord
hath sent."

Her story told, the plump bird flew away
And joined her mate beside a stack of hay.

A honey bee slept from a hollow tree
And looked about contented. Seeing
And being of a friendly turn of mind,
Dusted down where I lay sheltered from the
wind,
And said:

"Well, well! my modest little fern
How fares it with thee at the season's turn?
Hast shelter from the bitter northern blast
That soon will carry snow-flakes thick and
fast?

I have a store of plenty and to spare;
Indeed, there is abundance every where.
The crabs and bins are full, and all the land
Is blest with bounteous gifts from Nature's
hand."

Back to her store-house Mistress Bee then
dared,
Contented, pleased, and very happy hearted.

A lady-bug crawled out upon a limb
And stroked and smoothed her wing
so neat and prim,
Saying the while:

"Dear, dear! how fortunate
That we are living in this glorious state,
Where summer laps upon the winter time,
Where all the days are glorious and sublime.
With songs of Nature, where all things are
blest,
As in no other country in the west."

And so, the whole day long, my neigh-
bors all
Who answered to my interested call,
Had only words of pleasure and content,
For the good things the kindest Fate
had sent,
And I, a modest fern with verdure rife,
Am full contented with my lot in life.

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